

The University of Chicago

STUDIES  
IN THE CANON AND SOURCES OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED  
TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF  
THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
AND LITERATURE

1938

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By  
ARTHUR FRIEDMAN

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## GOLDSMITH AND THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE

### I

THE month of December, 1759, and the first half of January, 1760, would seem to have been an unprolific period in Goldsmith's career. He had done no writing for the *Critical review* since August, 1759, and his next contribution to it was for the issue of January, 1760 (published about the first of February). Probably his last contribution to the *Busy body* had been to the number for October 22, 1759, and his *Bee* had expired November 24. His first contribution to the *Public ledger* did not appear until January 17, 1760, and the first of his Chinese letters not until a week later. This period of a month and a half, then, would seem to mark the appearance of not more than two pieces of his writing—an essay in the *Royal magazine* for December, 1759, and possibly one in the *British magazine* for January, 1760 (published the first day of the month). It is not surprising, therefore, to find that for a part of this period Goldsmith was engaged in writing for a hitherto unnoticed periodical.

A copy, the only one known, of the first four numbers of the *Weekly magazine: or, gentleman and lady's polite companion* exists at the Henry E. Huntington Library.<sup>1</sup> The publisher of the magazine was I. Pottinger, who had published the *Busy body*, for which Goldsmith had been writing during October, 1759. The *Weekly magazine* was apparently a short-lived publication. The first four numbers appeared respectively on December 29, 1759,<sup>2</sup> and January 5, 12, and 19, 1760. Whether any more numbers appeared is uncertain.<sup>3</sup> Each number

<sup>1</sup> Permission to print from the periodical has been granted by the Director of Research at the Huntington Library. From the essays here first ascribed to Goldsmith I have quoted only such passages as are necessary for the proof, as it is hoped that at least some of the essays will be included in the edition of Goldsmith's works now being prepared under the editorship of Professor R. S. Crane.

<sup>2</sup> See the *London evening post* for December 27-29, 1759.

<sup>3</sup> At the end of the fourth number is this notice: "Number V. of this Work will be published on Saturday the 26th Instant, and it will be regularly continued every Saturday"; but I have found no advertisement in the newspapers of any number beyond the third. In the *London chronicle* for January 31-February 2, 1760, is advertised apparently the first number of a periodical with a similar title but a different publisher: "The Weekly Magazine, and Memoirs of Modern Literature. . . . Printed and sold by J. Townshend. . . ."

consists of about twenty-four octavo pages, devoted to familiar and critical essays, essays on various fields of natural history, short biographies of famous men, and translations from the French, Spanish, and Latin, with a few pages of poetry at the end.

That Goldsmith was writing for the *Weekly magazine* is quite certain, for in its pages appeared for the first time, so far as is known, two, or possibly three, of his recognized essays and one of his poems. In the first number is "Some thoughts preliminary to a general peace,"<sup>4</sup> which is the same as Goldsmith's "Thoughts upon the present situations of affairs," republished, with the addition of a paragraph at the beginning and with several verbal changes, in the *Lady's magazine* for October, 1761.<sup>5</sup> In the second number is "The history of Regnard, the French comic poet,"<sup>6</sup> probably by Goldsmith, and republished by him, with verbal changes, as editor of the *Lady's magazine* in July, 1761.<sup>7</sup> Also in the second number is "Serious reflections on the life and death of the late Mr. T—— C——, by the ordinary of Newgate,"<sup>8</sup> republished with considerable omissions and other changes in *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith* (1765). And following immediately after this essay is Goldsmith's poem "The double transformation: a tale,"<sup>9</sup> with fourteen lines which do not appear in the *Essays* of 1765.

## II

Since it is certain that Goldsmith was writing for the *Weekly magazine*, the question arises whether he made any unidentified contributions to the periodical. The answer is, I believe, that there are at least two essays which can be ascribed to him with a very high degree of probability.

1. The second place in the third number is devoted to an essay entitled "A sublime passage in a French sermon."<sup>10</sup> Most of the essay is taken up with a discussion of English pulpit eloquence. Now this was a subject in which Goldsmith was much interested: he treated

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 15-17.

<sup>5</sup> For Goldsmith's authorship of this essay see *New essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. R. S. Crane (Chicago, 1927), pp. 89-97.

<sup>6</sup> Pp. 31-34.

<sup>7</sup> See *New essays*, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> Pp. 44-46.

<sup>9</sup> Pp. 47-50. It is called "The double metamorphosis: a tale" in the *Weekly magazine*.

<sup>10</sup> Pp. 55-57.



it in two known essays—first two months earlier in "Of eloquence" in the *Bee*, No. VII (November 17, 1759), and later in "Some remarks on the modern manner of preaching," originally published in the *Lady's magazine* for December, 1760, and later included in *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith* (1765). These two essays contain several close parallels in thought or expression with the anonymous essay in the *Weekly magazine*.

In the third paragraph the anonymous essayist portrays and condemns English preaching: "To hear our preachers harrangue their audience as they would trifle at a tea table, afraid of the imputation of enthusiasm, and studious of being only thought fine gentlemen; what is this but to give up the cause they were sent to defend; and, like bad ambassadors, to take more pains to serve the kingdom to which they are sent, than that by which they have been employed." A similar picture of English preachers had been given by Goldsmith in the *Bee*: "From eloquence . . . the morals of our people are to expect emendation; but how little can they be improved by men who get into the pulpit rather to show their parts, than convince us of the truth of what they deliver; who are painfully correct in their style, musical in their tones; where every sentiment, every expression, seems the result of meditation and deep study!"<sup>11</sup> And much the same picture was given a year later in the essay in the *Lady's magazine*: "Men of real sense and understanding prefer a prudent mediocrity to a precarious popularity; and fearing to outdo their duty, leave it half done. Their discourses from the pulpit are generally dry, methodical, and unassuming; delivered with the most insipid calmness. . . ." <sup>12</sup> More striking is the comparison of English preachers to "bad ambassadors" who "take more pains to serve the kingdom to which they are sent, than that by which they have been employed," for Goldsmith used the same figure in the essay in the *Lady's magazine*: "The French preachers generally assume all that dignity which becomes men who are ambassadors from Christ: the English divines, like erroneous envoys, seem more solicitous not to offend the court to which they are sent, than to drive home the interests of their employer."<sup>13</sup>

In the same paragraph the anonymous essayist goes on to state that

<sup>11</sup> *Works*, ed. Gibbs (London, 1884-86), II, 426-27.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 271.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

sermons should appeal to the passions rather than the reason of the listeners.

It is not to be imagined what effects a fine sermon, finely, by which I mean earnestly, delivered, would have upon the passions of the audience; and as almost all our faults proceed from the error rather of our passions than our reason, they are the proper objects of a preacher's address; when he has seized upon those he may be said to have us all.

A similar argument for an appeal to the passions was stated by Goldsmith in the essay in the *Lady's magazine*:

This method of preaching is . . . by some called an address to reason, and not to the passions; this is styled the making of converts from conviction: but such are indifferently acquainted with human nature, who are not sensible, that men seldom reason about their debaucheries till they are committed. Reason is but a weak antagonist when headlong passion dictates; in all such cases we should arm one passion against another. . . .<sup>14</sup>

In the last sentence of the essay in the *Weekly magazine* the writer praises the Methodists for their manner of preaching: "When we see the conventicles of methodism so crowded as they are, what can we attribute it to except that earnest exhortation which gives an air of masculine eloquence, and while they never labour to please are often happy enough to persuade." Similar expressions of approval of Methodist preaching, very uncommon in the polite literature of the day, occur in both of Goldsmith's essays on preaching. First in the *Bee*:

When I think of the Methodist preachers among us, how seldom they are endued with common sense, and yet how often and how justly they affect their hearers, I cannot avoid saying within myself, had they been bred gentlemen, and been endued with even the meanest share of understanding, what might they not effect!<sup>15</sup>

Then, with more parallelism in details, in the *Lady's magazine*:

Impressed with a sense of the truths he is about to deliver, a preacher disregards the applause or the contempt of his audience, and he insensibly assumes a just and manly sincerity. With this talent alone, we see what crowds are drawn around enthusiasts, even destitute of common sense, what numbers converted to Christianity. Folly may sometimes set an example for wisdom to practise; and our regular divines may borrow instruction from even methodists, who go their circuits and preach prizes among the populace.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 426.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 273.



More convincing than these parallels, suggestive as they are of Goldsmith's authorship of the essay, is the "sublime passage in a French sermon" which gives the essay its title. The passage is from a sermon on the small number of the elect by Massillon, bishop of Clermont, and the significant thing about it is that it, with a long sentence of introduction, is an unacknowledged translation from Voltaire's article "Eloquence" in the fifth volume of the *Encyclopédie*.<sup>17</sup> Now from March, 1759, until the time of this essay Goldsmith had made at least eleven unacknowledged pilferings from the *Encyclopédie*, all but two of which were from this same fifth volume;<sup>18</sup> and that he still had the fifth volume by him in January, 1760, is quite certain, for he borrowed six passages from it for use in the *Critical review* of that month.<sup>19</sup> What is more striking, Goldsmith had on two occasions made extensive drafts on this same article by Voltaire in the *Encyclopédie*—first in the *Critical review* for April, 1759, and later in the essay "Of eloquence" in the *Bee* quoted above.<sup>20</sup> And, what is still more striking, in pilfering from Voltaire's article for this essay in the *Bee*, he translated the same passage from Massillon's sermon that is translated in the *Weekly magazine*.<sup>21</sup> The two translations are not identical, the one in the *Weekly magazine* being in general closer to the original; but there is some reason to think that they are both by the same hand. For example, at the end of the passage the *Encyclopédie* has: ". . . croyez-vous que s'il faisoit maintenant la discussion des œuvres du grand nombre qui est dans cette église, il trouvat seulement dix justes parmi nous? en trouveroit-il un seul?" It is thus rendered in the *Bee*: "Do you think, if all our works were examined with justice, would he find ten just persons in this great assembly? Monsters of ingratitude! would he find one?" And in the *Weekly magazine* it is translated thus: "Do you think that if their actions were marked with rigor, of this great assembly before me would he find even ten just persons among us all? Monsters in iniquity would he find One!" The "Monsters of ingratitude" of the *Bee* and the "Monsters in iniquity" of the *Weekly magazine* have no source in the French, and the latter

<sup>17</sup> V (1755), 530.

<sup>18</sup> See the *Times literary supplement*, May 11, 1933, p. 331.

<sup>19</sup> See R. S. Crane, *Philological quarterly*, XIII (1934), 29.

<sup>20</sup> See J. E. Brown, *Modern philology*, XXIII (1926), 273-75.

<sup>21</sup> *Works*, II, 423.

seems to be merely a recollection of the former. The evidence from this translated passage, then, together with the parallels in thought and expression with two known essays by Goldsmith, makes the ascription of this essay to him very highly probable.

2. In the third number is another essay, entitled "The futility of criticism,"<sup>22</sup> which seems even more clearly to be by Goldsmith. It is not only that the theme of the essay, as announced in the title, is one which Goldsmith preached in and out of season from the time when he "assumed the critic only to dissuade from criticism"<sup>23</sup> in *An enquiry into the present state of polite learning in Europe* (published in April, 1759) well through the period of the *Citizen of the world*. More important are a large number of parallels in thought and expression with known works of Goldsmith, both earlier and later in date than this essay—exactly the kind of parallels that are more characteristic of Goldsmith than of perhaps any other major English author.

The first two paragraphs of the essay are taken up with a story to show the futility of criticism in painting:

An ingenious painter of antiquity, as the story goes, was once resolved to make the most finished picture that could be conceived; he had been already very famous for his skill, but in the present case, was resolved to outdo even his former excellence, so therefore formed a design of making a piece without fault. When his work was done, not depending on his own judgment alone, he exposed this performance in the market-place, and entreated every spectator to declare his opinion, and with a pencil which lay ready for this purpose to mark what he thought amiss.

The good people took him at his word, each marked what to him appeared faulty; and our painter coming towards night, to take in his picture to correct the defects, found, to his great surprize, every feature in the face, and every fold in drapery, were stigmatiz'd with marks of disapprobation; still however conscious of his own skill, he was resolved to make a second trial, and the succeeding day exposed his piece as before, only altering his request, and entreating the spectators to mark with the pencil as before, those parts of the figure which appeared to have beauty. Coming towards night again to visit his piece, he now found every trait touched with tokens of approbation, and the same picture that yesterday was covered with defects, seemed now equally replete with beauty. In short, he plainly found that all those qualities which one set of men regard as excellencies, another may look upon as defects. No piece so faulty that will not have admirers, and none so perfect that may not be accused of errors.

<sup>22</sup> Pp. 60-61.

<sup>23</sup> *Works*, III, 512 n.



This same story, with several similarities of expression, was used by Goldsmith six months later in one of the Chinese letters in the *Public ledger* later included in the *Citizen of the world*:

A painter of eminence was once resolved to finish a piece which should please the whole world. When, therefore, he had drawn a picture, in which his utmost skill was exhausted, it was exposed in the public market-place, with directions at the bottom for every spectator to mark with a brush, which lay by, every limb and feature which seemed erroneous. The spectators came, and in general applauded; but each, willing to show his talent at criticism, marked whatever he thought proper. At evening, when the painter came, he was mortified to find the whole picture one universal blot—not a single stroke that was not stigmatized with marks of disapprobation: not satisfied with this trial, the next day he was resolved to try them in a different manner, and, exposing his picture as before, desired that every spectator would mark those beauties he approved or admired. The people complied: and the artist returning, found his picture replete with the marks of beauty: every stroke that had been yesterday condemned, now received the character of approbation. "Well," cries the painter, "I now find that the best way to please one half of the world, is not to mind what the other half says; since what are faults in the eyes of these, shall be by those regarded as beauties."<sup>24</sup>

After telling the story, the writer of the essay in the *Weekly magazine* goes on to make an application to criticism: "As in painting, so in criticism, no piece so indifferent that may not be calculated to give some readers pleasure, except the critics by profession, they read only to shew the superiority of their own judgment, and prove a man a blockhead in spite of his teeth. . . ." The distinction made in the first part of the sentence between the judgments of professional critics and of the general reader had been made by Goldsmith in the *Enquiry*: "The ingenious Mr. Hogarth used to assert, that every one except the connoisseur was a judge of painting. The same may be asserted of writing. The public, in general, set the whole piece in the proper point of view; the critic lays his eye close to all its minuteness, and condemns or approves in detail."<sup>25</sup> The idea that critics "read only to shew the superiority of their own judgment" had been suggested by Goldsmith in the *Enquiry* in his reference to "the dullest critic, who strives at a reputation for delicacy, by showing he cannot be pleased."<sup>26</sup> And the remark at the end of the sentence that the critics "prove a

<sup>24</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter LXI (July 23, 1760); *Works*, III, 231–32.

<sup>25</sup> *Works*, III, 513.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 466.



man a blockhead in spite of his teeth" was made by Goldsmith a few months later in his description of a bookseller's visit to the Chinese: " 'Be what you will, we shall criticise you,' returned the bookseller, 'and prove you a dunce in spite of your teeth.' " <sup>27</sup>

The writer of the essay continues in the same paragraph: "They [the critics], in short, are prepared to hang, draw, and quarter, and still, to make the allusion stronger, like hangmen they are forced into the trade, for having been themselves condemned as offenders." The idea that the body of critics is made up of writers who have themselves been criticized had been expressed by Goldsmith on two earlier occasions, each time accompanied by a figure similar to that of the hangman. It appeared first in the *Enquiry*: "The writer possessed of fame . . . is willing to enjoy it without a rival, by lessening every competitor; or, if unsuccessful, he is desirous to turn upon others the contempt which is levelled at himself, and being convicted at the bar of literary justice, hopes for pardon by accusing every brother of the same profession." <sup>28</sup> And it appeared again a few months later in the *Bee*: "Another has written a book himself, and being condemned for a dunce, he turns a sort of king's evidence in criticism, and now becomes the terror of every offender." <sup>29</sup>

In the next paragraph of the essay the writer proceeds to the origins of criticism:

Had these measurers of merit gone before genius, and pointed out the path it was to follow, we might have been obliged to their labours; but, alas! all they have done is only to tell us how others have excelled, and that we can see without their assistance. Homer wrote before there were critics in Greece, Virgil before there were any in Rome, and Milton excelled, previous to criticism in England. The republic of letters, crowded with such unnecessary dependants, somewhat resembles the Persian armies of old, where the number principally consisted of slaves, women and children.

The idea that writers of genius precede critics was one that Goldsmith emphasized in the *Enquiry*, devoting several pages to show the truth of it in Greece and Rome. <sup>30</sup> More striking is the comparison of the republic of letters to a Persian army, for Goldsmith used the same figure three months later in one of the Chinese letters:

<sup>27</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter LI (June 23, 1760); *Works*, III, 194.

<sup>28</sup> *Works*, III, 465-66.

<sup>29</sup> *Bee*, No. IV (October 27, 1759); *Works*, II, 364.

<sup>30</sup> See *Works*, III, 470-73.

. . . a single new book employs not only the paper-makers, the printers, the pressmen, the bookbinders, the hawkers, but twenty critics, and as many compilers. In short, the body of the learned may be compared to a Persian army, where there are many pioneers, several sutlers, numberless servants, women and children in abundance, and but few soldiers.<sup>31</sup>

In the next paragraph of the essay the writer goes on to show that the critics are faulty also in precept: "But they are not only defective in point of time but in precept also, it were an easy matter to prove that most of their rules instead of being taken from nature, are only founded in erroneous example; and that they frequently praise men of established reputations, even in their defects." The main idea here, that critical rules are founded not upon nature but upon the works of preceding authors, was one that Goldsmith had enforced in the *Enquiry*:

It was observed how some of the most admired poets had copied nature. From these they [the critics] collected dry rules, dignified with long names, and such were obtruded upon the public for their improvement. Common sense would be apt to suggest, that the art might be studied to more advantage, rather by imitation than precept. It might suggest that those rules were collected, not from nature, but a copy of nature, and would consequently give us still fainter resemblances of original beauty.<sup>32</sup>

The author of the essay continues in the same paragraph: "Established reputation is always sure of the critics indulgence, his greatest antipathy is ever levelled at rising genius; he praises the one to shew the rectitude of his taste, and condemns the other to prove the delicacy of his discernment." The idea that critics condemn to show the delicacy of their discernment has already been commented upon. The other idea, that critics praise writers of established reputation only to show their own good taste, was a favorite with Goldsmith. He stated it first in the *Critical review* for January, 1759:

The praise which is every day lavished upon Virgil, Horace, or Ovid, is often no more than an indirect method the critic takes to compliment his own discernment. Their works have long been considered as models of beauty; to praise them now is only to show the conformity of our taste to theirs: it tends not to advance their reputation, but to promote our own.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter XX (March 20, 1760); *Works*, III, 76.

<sup>32</sup> *Works*, III, 472.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 325.

He returned to the theme in a review published only about two weeks after this essay: "The praise bestowed on a writer of established reputation, is perhaps more frequently designed as a compliment to ourselves than the author: we only shew the rectitude of our own taste by a standard allowed already to be just. . . ." <sup>34</sup> Finally, he gave expression to the same theme several months later in one of the Chinese letters: "The truth is, we deliver those criticisms in public which are supposed to be best calculated not to do justice to the author, but to impress others with an opinion of our superior discernment." <sup>35</sup>

It is impossible, I think, to follow these parallels between the essay and known works of Goldsmith, both earlier and later in date, without concluding that the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship is very much more probable than any alternate one. The last two paragraphs of the essay are concerned largely with contemporary critical taste in poetry, and they contain no very striking parallels with Goldsmith's writings. They are, in other words, the only part of the essay which adds anything to our knowledge of Goldsmith's ideas.

### III

In addition to these two essays which can be ascribed to Goldsmith with a very high degree of probability, there are several other pieces which, in one way or another, suggest the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship, although the evidence in most cases is hardly full enough to make the ascriptions conclusive.

1. The first place in the first number is occupied by an essay entitled "Introduction," which purports to be a proposal by a club of authors to write for the *Weekly magazine*. Although, it is said, their offer is refused, their written proposal nevertheless is used as an introduction to the work. The manner of the entire essay is not unlike Goldsmith's, and one section, telling the subjects on which the various authors propose to write, is particularly suggestive of his authorship: If . . . the wind happens to sit in the East, we have Eastern writers, who, in the taking a pinch of snuff, can throw ye off an Eastern tale, compose pastorals, or settle the balance of Europe; if on the other hand, it should blow from the Hibernian shores, we intend to send out an author, properly prepared,

<sup>34</sup> *Critical review*, IX (January, 1760), 11. For Goldsmith's authorship of this review see R. S. Crane, *Philological quarterly*, XIII (1934), 21-29.

<sup>35</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter XCVII (November 7, 1760); *Works*, III, 358.



to catch the inspiring gale, and work up our conundrums, carawitchits, rebusses, and artificial bulls. We have a South wind genius, who, on these occasions, invents cures for the bite of a mad dog, gives an account of uncommon births, describes monsters, prodigies, the phenomena of earthquakes, and the best method of raising collyflowers.

Here are found some of Goldsmith's favorite objects of ridicule. With the mention of eastern tales and cures for the bite of a mad dog one familiar with Goldsmith's works recalls the author at the club visited by the Chinese philosopher who "writes receipts for the bite of a mad dog, and throws off an Eastern tale to perfection"<sup>36</sup> and the son of the vicar of Wakefield, whose "essays were buried among the essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog."<sup>37</sup> And with the mention of pastorals and rebuses one recalls the prince who "made epic poems, tragedies, and pastorals, with surprising facility; song, epigram, or rebus, was all one to him, though it was observed he could never finish an acrostic."<sup>38</sup>

2. The third place in No. I is devoted to an essay entitled "A description of the manners and customs of the native Irish. In a letter from an English gentleman."<sup>39</sup> The subject of the essay, as announced in the title, is, of course, one with which Goldsmith was familiar. More suggestive of his authorship, however, are a few parallels in thought and expression with his known works. The most important of these parallels occurs in the first sentence of the essay: "While our travellers are busied in studying the manners, the soil, and produce of distant countries, there are several which are at our very doors possessed of peculiarities hitherto unknown, and yet quite neglected; like conquerors who have been too eagerly employed in foreign conquests, we leave our native dominions without notice or regard." This figure of the conquerors had been used by Goldsmith in similar contexts on two earlier occasions. It occurs first in his review of Mallet's *Remains of the mythology and poetry of the Celtes* in the *Monthly review* for 1757, and it forms part of one of the few sentences in the piece which is not merely translated from a French review:<sup>40</sup> "The

<sup>36</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter XXIX (April 14, 1760); *Works*, III, 111.

<sup>37</sup> *Works*, I, 159. On eastern tales see also *ibid.*, p. 259, and III, 125-27, and on cures for the bite of a mad dog, *ibid.*, pp. 254, 285, and *New essays*, p. 73.

<sup>38</sup> *Citizen of the world*, Letter XLVIII (June 17, 1760); *Works*, III, 181. On pastorals see also *Works*, III, 359, 383, and on rebuses, *ibid.*, II, 365.

<sup>39</sup> Pp. 7-13.

<sup>40</sup> See Caroline F. Tupper, *Modern language notes*, XLV (1930), 75.

learned on this side the Alps have long laboured at the antiquities of Greece and Rome, but almost totally neglected their own; like conquerors who, while they have made inroads into the territories of their neighbours, have left their own natural dominions to desolation."<sup>41</sup> And it occurs again in the opening sentence of the chapter "Of polite learning in Germany" in the *Enquiry*: "If we examine the state of learning in Germany, we shall find that the Germans early discovered a passion for polite literature; but unhappily, like conquerors, who, invading the dominions of others, leave their own to desolation, instead of studying the German tongue, they continue to write in Latin."<sup>42</sup>

The other parallels are less important, but they show that the writer in the *Weekly magazine* and Goldsmith had similar interests. The anonymous author distinguishes between the character of the native Irish and of the English who have been transplanted to Ireland and shows how the character of the latter has been affected;<sup>43</sup> he says that the manners of the native Irish are preserved unvaried;<sup>44</sup> he mentions the Irish story of Kaul Kroodareg;<sup>45</sup> and he describes an Irish wake.<sup>46</sup> Finally, in the last sentence of the essay he expresses the idea that "every country is more drunken in proportion as it is barbarous," much the same as the idea expressed by Goldsmith a few months later in the *British magazine* for April, 1760, that "drunkenness is ever the vice of a barbarous, and gaming of a luxurious age."<sup>47</sup>

3. Following after "Some thoughts preliminary to a general peace" in No. I and concluded in No. II is an essay entitled "Some original memoirs of the late famous Bishop of Cloyne."<sup>48</sup> One anecdote in it, concerning Berkeley when a student in Trinity College, Dublin, is important in determining the authorship of the essay:

... curiosity leading him [Berkeley] one day in the crowd to go to see an execution, he returned home pensive and melancholy, and could not forbear reflecting on what he had seen. He desired to know what were the pains and symptoms a malefactor felt upon such an occasion, and communicated to his chum the cause of his strange curiosity; in short he was resolved to tuck himself up for a trial, at the same time desiring his companion to take him down at a signal agreed upon.

<sup>41</sup> *Works*, IV, 233-34.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 483.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *New essays*, p. 51.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Works*, I, 392; V, 268.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, II, 367.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, I, 393.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>48</sup> Pp. 17-20 and 34-37.

The companion (whose name was Contarine, and from whom I had the story) was to try the same experiment himself immediately after. Berkley was therefore tied up to the ceiling, and the chair taken from under his feet, but soon losing the use of his senses, his companion it seems waited a little too long for the signal agreed upon, and our enquirer had like to have been hanged in good earnest; for as soon as he was taken down he fell senseless and motionless upon the floor. After some trouble however he was brought to himself; and observing his band: bless my heart, Contarine, says he, you have quite rumpled my band. When it came to Contarine's turn to go up he quickly evaded the proposal; the other's danger had quite abated his curiosity.<sup>49</sup>

This anecdote of Berkeley, which has been told in most subsequent biographies of the philosopher, seems to have appeared first in this account.<sup>50</sup> The importance of the anecdote is that the Contarine who figures in the anecdote and from whom the writer says he had the story was almost certainly the uncle who paid for much of Goldsmith's education, the Rev. Thomas Contarine. Percy and Prior both tell this same anecdote about him.<sup>51</sup> More important, he was the only Contarine ever to attend Trinity College, Dublin,<sup>52</sup> and he and Berkeley were there at the same time.<sup>53</sup> Of the small number of men who would be engaged in writing for a magazine of this sort, it seems highly improbable that anyone aside from Goldsmith himself would have known his uncle, who spent his life in Ireland. Consequently it is very probable that Goldsmith was the author of the anecdote and the memoirs.

4. In the second number is "The life of the Hon. Robert Boyle,"<sup>54</sup> which can be ascribed to Goldsmith with a fairly high degree of probability. Much of the life is borrowed—for the most part in a condensed

<sup>49</sup> P. 18.

<sup>50</sup> The "Original memoirs" of the *Weekly magazine* were incorporated, apparently with extended omissions, in *The British Plutarch, or biographical entertainer* (1763). They were then reprinted from *The British Plutarch* as the principal novelty of that work in the *Monthly review* for October, 1763 (XXIX, 313-17), and the reviewer gives some new information about Berkeley at the end of the review. They were a third time reprinted, this time from the *Monthly review*, for the details given by the reviewer are incorporated, in the *Annual register* for 1763 (pp. 2-5 of "Characters"). None of the modern biographers seems to have traced back the anecdote farther than the fourth-hand account in the *Annual register*.

<sup>51</sup> See Percy's memoir, p. 17 n., in *The miscellaneous works of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.* (London, 1801), Vol. I, and James Prior, *The life of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.* (London, 1837), I, 52.

<sup>52</sup> See G. D. Burtchaell and T. U. Sadleir, *Alumni Dublinenses* (London, 1924), p. 172.

<sup>53</sup> Berkeley entered March 21, 1699-1700, and received his B.A. in the spring of 1704 and his M.A. in the summer of 1707 (*ibid.*, p. 61). Contarine entered October 2, 1701, and received his B.A. in the spring of 1706 (*ibid.*, p. 172).

<sup>54</sup> Pp. 40-44.



form, though some sentences word for word—from the *Biographia Britannica*,<sup>55</sup> a work upon which Goldsmith was to make extensive drafts in writing his life of Bolingbroke ten years later.<sup>56</sup> To this the writer made a few additions, and in some of them appear indications of Goldsmith's authorship.

The most important of the additions comes at the beginning of the life where the author characterizes the biography of a scholar: "The life of a scholar is generally best seen in his writings; retired from the gaze of the vulgar, his actions pass in silence and obscurity, his virtues and vices are unknown to all except those who enjoy his more intimate acquaintance, and there is seldom any thing found to mark the calm anecdotes of his history, except the dates of his different publications." Goldsmith similarly characterized the biography of a man of letters, using one identical phrase ("calm anecdotes"), in the opening sentence of his *Memoirs of M. de Voltaire* (written at the close of 1758; published in 1761): "That life which has been wholly employed in the study, is properly seen only in the author's writings; there is no variety to entertain, nor adventure to interest us in the calm anecdotes of such an existence."<sup>57</sup> And Goldsmith used much the same theme in the opening paragraph of *The life of Dr. Parnell* (1770): "The life of a scholar seldom abounds with adventure. His fame is acquired in solitude, and the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions by which he is scarce distinguished from the rest of mankind."<sup>58</sup>

Two other additions in the life help somewhat to substantiate the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship. The following sentence, which has no source in the *Biographia Britannica*, suggests the authorship of someone acquainted with Irish customs: "The manner in which children are brought up by the nurses in that country [Ireland] is certainly very commendable; for, some time after birth, the infant is plunged every day in cold water, which at once gives an elasticity to the solids, and fits perhaps the mind not less than the body for vigor and dispatch." The other addition shows an estimate of Bacon similar to that found in Goldsmith's works: "Philosophy had but a little be-

<sup>55</sup> *Biographia Britannica: or, the lives of the most eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland*, II (London, 1748), 913-34.

<sup>56</sup> See *Modern language notes*, L (1935), 25-29.

<sup>57</sup> *Works*, IV, 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

fore began [*sic*] to pursue the true path to knowledge; she had been before busied in empty speculation and indefensible hypothesis, till the great Bacon arose to point out the true method to direct from words to things, from theory to experiment."<sup>59</sup>

5. In the section devoted to poetry in No. II is a short poem of six lines entitled "Epitaph for the Rev. Dr. Milner."<sup>60</sup> On internal evidence there is no basis for an ascription of authorship, but the fact that it is an epitaph for the Rev. Dr. Milner suggests that Goldsmith may have been the author. The only Dr. Milner whose death is recorded in the *London magazine* or the *Gentleman's magazine* from 1757 to 1760 is that of "the Rev. and learned Dr. John Milner, minister of a dissenting congregation at Peckham," in June, 1757.<sup>61</sup> Now Goldsmith had for a time, probably late in 1756 or early in 1757, officiated at the school of this same Dr. John Milner at Peckham.<sup>62</sup> And of the few men who would have been engaged in writing for the *Weekly magazine*, it seems hardly probable that anyone aside from Goldsmith would have known Milner or would have been sufficiently interested in him to write his epitaph.

6. In the third number, following immediately after "The futility of criticism," is another essay which there is some reason to ascribe to Goldsmith, entitled "On the present state of our theatres."<sup>63</sup> This subject was one in which Goldsmith was deeply interested at this period of his career; he had included a chapter on the stage in the *Enquiry*, he had written three papers on the theater for the *Bee*, and he was to treat the theater again in some of the Chinese letters in the *Public ledger*. More specifically, there are at least two themes in the essay which Goldsmith had used or was to use in his known works. In the first paragraph the writer complains that theatrical audiences no longer enjoy the witty comedy of the last age: "The audience now sit uneasy at the sprightly sallies of Vanburgh, or Congreve, and with impatience desire only to see the Invasion or the Fair." Goldsmith similarly commented on the contemporary distaste for witty comedy in *The vicar of Wakefield* (probably written in 1761 and 1762): "No,

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, III, 388, IV, 344, and V, 146.

<sup>60</sup> P. 52.

<sup>61</sup> See the *London magazine*, XXVI (1757), 308, and the *Gentleman's magazine*, XXVII (1757), 290.

<sup>62</sup> See Prior, *Life*, I, 216.

<sup>63</sup> Pp. 61-63.

Sir, the works of Congreve and Farquhar have too much wit in them for the present taste; our modern dialect is much more natural."<sup>64</sup> And upon at least two later occasions Goldsmith expressed a preference for the comedy of the last age.<sup>65</sup>

The third paragraph of the essay is devoted to a complaint that the theatrical managers and not the town have become the sole judges of literary merit and that very few new plays are allowed to appear; and this complaint, a fairly common one at the period, of course, had been made by Goldsmith in the *Enquiry*.<sup>66</sup> Of more significance than the theme itself is a figure used in its development: "... our managers think they deal generously by us if they give one new play during the whole season: this, therefore, as the audience have not an opportunity of chusing, is sure to be approved; and we thus find that every new play is very fine till it ceases to be new; like losing gamesters we vainly expect every last throw to retrieve the former unfortunate run." Goldsmith had used this same figure of the gamester in a similar context and in almost exactly the same words in his review of Home's *Douglas* in the *Monthly review* for May, 1757: "When the town, by a tedious succession of indifferent performances, has been long confined to censure, it will naturally wish for an opportunity of praise; and, like a losing gamester, vainly expect every last throw must retrieve the former."<sup>67</sup>

7. In No. IV, finally, is an essay entitled "The modern taste in music considered,"<sup>68</sup> which contains several parallels with Goldsmith's known writings. After stating the general proposition that "every art when it has attained perfection from the natural instability of human things, necessarily declines towards its former imperfection," an idea which Goldsmith advances upon more than one occasion,<sup>69</sup> the writer

<sup>64</sup> *Works*, I, 147.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 145, and I, 398-402.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 517-20, 536-37.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 249-50. Cf. also *Citizen of the world*, Letter LXXIII (September 12, 1760); *Works*, III, 276: "Yet experience and sensation in vain persuade; hope, more powerful than either, dresses out the distant prospect in fancied beauty; some happiness in long perspective still beckons me to pursue; and, like a losing gamester, every new disappointment increases my ardour to continue the game."

<sup>68</sup> Pp. 95-97.

<sup>69</sup> See particularly *Citizen of the world*, Letter LXIII (August 13, 1760), *Works*, III, 238-40, and cf. *Enquiry*, chap. ii (*Works*, III, 467-68), and the *Bee*, No. V (*Works*, II, 397-98).



presently proceeds to a discussion of the state of music in England. In his consideration of composers occurs this paragraph:

There is another innovation in musical composition, which nothing but a true musical genius can remedy; I mean that of our performers now attempting to make the sound an echo to the sense: thus if rage is to be express'd, they attempt to imitate anger on their fiddles, if laughing, the notes are set in a short interrupted movement; and if sorrow, the very notes of a woman crying are aimed at. But it is not thus by mimicing our passions that they are to be raised: this imitation is but a paultry art that every fidler may arrive at; but it is not, I say, by such ways our passions are to be raised by music, there are very slow, and very soft movements, sometimes finely expressive of rage, and some very quick, and seemingly sprightly ones, that inspire the most luxurious melancholy; it lies however only in the breast of the true genius to hit upon either. Instances however of both are to be found in the works of that excellent musician and philosopher Mr. Rameau.

This same preference for music which appeals to the passions without imitating them occurs in Goldsmith's essay, "On the different schools of music," which appeared only a little over a week later in the *British magazine* for February, 1760 (published the first day of the month): This great master's [Pergolese's] principal art consisted in knowing how to excite our passions by sounds which seem frequently opposite to the passion they would express: by slow, solemn sounds he is sometimes known to throw us into all the rage of a battle; and even by faster movements he excites melancholy in every heart that sounds are capable of affecting. This is a talent which seems born with the artist.<sup>70</sup>

And the mention of "that excellent musician and philosopher Mr. Rameau" in the last sentence of the paragraph quoted above is paralleled in the *British magazine* in a reference to "Rameau, who is at once a musician and a philosopher."<sup>71</sup>

When the writer proceeds to criticize musical performers, another passage is of interest:

I know not what first gave rise to the running at the close in singing, but whatever was the occasion of it, it was the most silly unmeaning fancy that could be conceived; and, to confess a truth, I never hear the singer fetch a large inspiration and prepare himself for the close, that the whole passion of the former part is not quite obliterated, while I only see him endeavouring to shew the extent of his wind and voice. . . . The length of the close is not more disagreeable than a shake immoderately long; it raises no passion, the

<sup>70</sup> *Works*, I, 386-87.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

ear is fatigued with it, and what should be made to appear as the spontaneous vibration of a full voice, is shewn thus to be the studied effect of art.

A similar distaste for closings and shakes in singing had been expressed by Goldsmith less than two months before in his paper "Of the opera in England" in the last number of the *Bee*:

Every singer generally chooses a favourite air, not from the excellency of the music, but from the difficulty; such songs are generally chosen as surprise rather than please, where the performer may show his compass, his breath, and his volubility.

From hence proceed those unnatural startings, those unmusical closings, and shakes lengthened out to a painful continuance; such, indeed, may show a voice, but it must give a truly delicate ear the utmost uneasiness.<sup>72</sup>

One passage in the essay remains to be considered. In the first paragraph the writer advances the idea that "of all the arts, perhaps music alone is the only one which has attained its greatest perfection": Corelli perhaps brought melody and simple harmony to as high a pitch as sounds could go; Handel has given every part of harmony, and filled, if I may so express it, every vacuity in continued music. Every thing in him is copious, satisfactory, and passionate; nor do we, while we hear, conceive a wish for greater perfection. To raise the passions by music is their finest effect, for when sounds leave no pathetic traces on the mind the pleasure they give is so transient and unsatisfactory, that they be compared to the pleasure tickling gives, amusing only during the operation; but when sounds address the passions, the soul contracts a happy glow of thought, which continues long after the music has ceased to charm.

With this passage is to be compared one on Handel in Goldsmith's essay "On the different schools of music":

Handel's true characteristic is sublimity; he has employed all the variety of sounds and parts in all his pieces: the performances of the rest may be pleasing, though executed by few performers; his require the full band. The attention is awakened, the soul is roused up at his pieces; but distinct passion is seldom expressed. In this particular he has seldom found success; he has been obliged, in order to express passion, to imitate words by sounds, which, though it gives the pleasure which imitation always produces, yet it fails of exciting those lasting affections which it is in the power of sounds to produce. In a word, no man ever understood harmony so well as he; but in melody he has been exceeded by several.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>72</sup> *Bee*, No. VIII (November 24, 1759); *Works*, II, 453.

<sup>73</sup> *Works*, I, 388.

Certain similarities between the passages are obvious enough: the general estimates of Handel are similar, and in each case he is described as being the greatest master of harmony. But a difficulty arises in interpreting the last sentence in the passage from the *Weekly magazine*. Coming as it does without any transition after the praise of Handel, is it meant to be a continuation of that praise? If so, Handel's music is here praised for appealing to the passions and thus exciting lasting affections, and in the second passage it is criticized for not doing so; and the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship becomes less tenable. Or is the sentence merely meant to characterize music in general which has reached a state of perfection and not to apply specifically to Handel? If so, the disagreement between the two passages largely disappears. Or, when the writer says, "Nor do we, while we hear [Handel's music], conceive a wish for greater perfection," is it possible that he is implying that Handel's music is perfectly satisfying only as long as it is heard and that it is the kind of music described in the last sentence which leaves "no pathetic traces on the mind"? If this last interpretation can be accepted, the passages in the two essays agree quite perfectly, and the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship becomes highly probable.

These seven pieces comprise the list of less certain attributions. From the parallels and other evidence presented, the hypothesis of Goldsmith's authorship in each case is certainly tenable. And since they appeared in a periodical to which he is known to have made several contributions, they all seem worthy of consideration for a place among Goldsmith's works.

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## GOLDSMITH AND THE MARQUIS D'ARGENS

In the *British Magazine* for May, 1760, appeared an anonymous essay entitled "A Dream," describing the author's visit to the Fountain of Fine Sense and to the Fountain of Good Sense; it was first ascribed to Oliver Goldsmith by Thomas Wright in *Essays and Criticisms, by Dr. Goldsmith* (1798) and has since been included in collected editions of his works. This essay, it appears, is closely imitated from the "Dix-neuvième Songe" in *Songes philosophiques* by Jean Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens.

The first paragraph of the essay from the *British Magazine* is a fairly close paraphrase of the beginning of d'Argens' paper:

I fancied myself placed at the foot of a high mountain, and saw round me several people who were preparing to climb up its steepy side. Desirous of knowing whither they were going, I mixed in the crowd, and attempted to ascend as well as the rest. Near half way to the top I perceived a fountain, of which several drank with the utmost eagerness; and not even the pump-room at Bath could be filled with a greater variety of characters. Lords, bishops, squires, tradesmen, and men without trades, strove each for a draught; and as each drank he seemed intoxicated, though but with water. The drinkers spoke frequently without understanding what they said; they decided magisterially on subjects which they did not comprehend; and judged of works they had never seen. They talked of painting without knowing the elements of the art; and decided upon music without having an ear to distinguish harmony. Nothing, in short, could be more ridiculous than their conversation. They in general aimed at being sayers of "good

J'étois au pied d'une haute montagne sur laquelle plusieurs personnes montoient: je fus curieux de voir ce qu'elles y alloient faire, & je les suivis. Lorsque je fus arrivé au milieu de la montagne, je vis que celles qui y étoient, buvoient avec avidité de l'eau d'une fontaine, auprès de laquelle il y avoit des gens de toutes les conditions. Lorsque ces personnes avoient avalé une certaine quantité d'eau, on auroit cru qu'elles étoient yvres: elles parloient très souvent sans sçavoir ce qu'elles disoient; elles décidoient avec un air d'autorité sur des matieres dont elles n'avoient aucune connoissance; elles jugeoient des Ouvrages qu'elles n'avoient jamais lûs; elles parloient de vers sans sçavoir les règles de la versification; elles prononçoient des décisions qu'elles croyoient infaillibles sur le mérite des Peintres, des Sculpteurs, des Graveurs, sans avoir la moindre idée du dessein; elles jugeoient de la Musique & n'avoient point d'oreille. Enfin rien ne parut plus ridicule que les discours de tous ces gens; cependant ils donnoient le

things," which some uttered with solemn pride, and others with petulant loquacity.<sup>1</sup>

titre de *choses spirituelles* aux sottises & aux impertinences qu'ils débitoient, les uns avec emphase & fort gravement, les autres avec beaucoup de pétulance.<sup>2</sup>

The next paragraph in the essay ascribed to Goldsmith, consisting of a conversation between a lady and a lord on the state of literature, seems to have been suggested by a similar conversation between a lady and a bishop in d'Argens' paper. The next two paragraphs in the English essay have no source in the French, but the passage following them is unmistakably paraphrased from d'Argens:

Disgusted with such conversation, I was upon the point of returning back; when one of the crowd, addressing me, said, "Dear Sir, won't you drink before you go? here you are got to the fountain of *fine sense*, and yet are going away without tasting!" "What!" replied I, "is this the fountain of *fine sense*?" "Yes, Sir," said he, "and as soon as you shall have drank of its waters, you will find yourself every whit as amiable and pleasing as the rest of the company." "Excuse me, Sir," says I, "if the waters are to have the same effect upon me that I see them have upon the rest of the company, I disclaim all pretensions to *fine sense*, and am much better pleased with common sense." "Ah my dear [Sir]," returned he, with a shrug, "keep your common sense for a circle of Hollanders or aldermen. Without taste, virtue, and

Les discours des gens que j'avois vû boire à la fontaine m'empêcherent de goûter de son eau: j'étois prêt à descendre au pied de la montagne, lorsqu'un homme m'aborda & me dit: "Monsieur, vous êtes à la source du bel esprit, & vous ne buvez point?" "Quoi! répondis-je, la fontaine que je vois est la fontaine le l'esprit!" "Oui, reprit-il, c'est elle-même, & dès que vous aurez bû de son eau vous serez aussi éclairé & aussi aimable que nous le sommes." *Si les eaux de cette fontaine*, repliquai-je, *rendent les hommes tels que sont ceux que je vois ici, je me contente du bon sens, & je renonce à jamais au bel esprit.* "Conservez donc, me dit en haussant les épaules l'homme qui me parloit, votre triste bon sens. Allez, Monsieur, allez, vous pourrez un jour acquérir l'estime des Vénitiens & des Hollandois. Il reste encore au bon sens

<sup>1</sup> *The Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. J. W. M. Gibbs (London, 1884-86), iv, 477.

<sup>2</sup> *Songes philosophiques par l'Auteur des Lettres juives* (Berlin, 1746), pp. 140-141. An English translation of this work was published in 1757 under the title of *Philosophical Visions*, but it seems to me quite certain that the imitation was based on the French.



delicacy, how insipid is every society! ”

I was just upon the point of descending the mountain, when I perceived some persons at the summit; and though I knew it must cost me great pains, did what I could to join them. When with incredible labour I had gained it, I there found a second fountain, round which several persons were placed, who drank freely of its waters; and seemed at once to unite gravity, sense, and humour.<sup>3</sup>

ces deux endroits en Europe: il ose y paroître sans être orné par le bel esprit; mais ailleurs, dès qu'il est seul, il est sifflé.”

Je quittai cet homme, & je songeais à descendre de la montagne, lorsque j'aperçus au sommet quelques personnes: j'avois beaucoup à monter pour les joindre; cependant je voulus contenter ma curiosité, & après avoir marché quelque tems j'arrivai au haut de la montagne. J'y trouvai une seconde fontaine, autour de laquelle étoient rangées quelques personnes qui, en buvant de son eau, s'entretenoient sur diverses matieres, & joignoient au bon sens beaucoup d'esprit.<sup>4</sup>

The accounts in the two essays of the authors who are drinking at this second fountain are not very close; indeed only two authors, Voltaire and Maffei, are mentioned in both papers. But the two essays conclude similarly; in each case the writer awakens just when he is going to drink of the water of the fountain with no other advantage from his imaginary journey than a better realization of the difference between true and false wit.

What light does this evidence of borrowing in the essay ascribed to Goldsmith throw upon the question of his authorship? Anyone familiar with Goldsmith's literary habits will recognize that the mere fact that this paper is closely imitated from the French does not argue against his authorship, for by the time it appeared in May, 1760, he had for many months been in the habit of turning to French sources whenever original inspiration failed him. The question, then, is whether or not it is probable that Goldsmith would have imitated this particular work, which he does not seem to have used as a source in his recognized writings. Now at the very period when this essay was probably written, the author from whom Goldsmith was borrowing most frequently and most directly was the Marquis d'Argens. The influence of the Frenchman's *Lettres chinoises* is to be seen from 24 January 1760 in the very

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, iv, 478-79.

<sup>4</sup> *Songes philosophiques*, pp. 143-44.

first of Goldsmith's series of Chinese Letters (later to become *The Citizen of the World*), and between then and May of the same year Goldsmith made use of the same source for no less than five letters or considerable portions of letters as well as for details in at least seven others.<sup>5</sup> Again, in his Chinese Letter for 18 March 1760 he made use of two passages in another work by d'Argens, the *Lettres juives*.<sup>6</sup> Finally, it is quite possible that Goldsmith became acquainted with the *Songes philosophiques* through his use of the *Lettres chinoises*. The edition of the *Songes philosophiques* which I have consulted, though its title-page says "A Berlin, Suivant la Copie originale. M.DCC.XLVI," and it has independent pagination and signatures, is included in the sixth volume of the *Lettres chinoises* published at La Haye in 1755; and that its inclusion in the set was intended by the publisher seems clear from the fact that the eighty-four pages which conclude the *Lettres chinoises* in this sixth volume could hardly make up a volume by themselves. Consequently, if Goldsmith used this particular edition of the *Lettres chinoises*, he may very well have come across d'Argens' philosophical visions and used one of them as the model for the paper in the *British Magazine*.

The case for Goldsmith's authorship, then, is this: the essay appeared in a periodical to which he was at the time a regular contributor, and of the small number of men who would have been writing for such a magazine it seems hardly probable that anyone except Goldsmith would have had sufficient interest in d'Argens to borrow from one of his minor pieces. Thus the fact that the essay is an imitation seems to increase the probability of Goldsmith's authorship in something the same proportion as it decreases our interest in the essay itself.

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<sup>5</sup> See R. S. Crane and H. J. Smith, "A French Influence on Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*," *MP.*, xix (1921), 83-92.

<sup>6</sup> See A. L. Sells, *Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith* (Paris, 1924), p. 105. I think that in this case Goldsmith used an English translation entitled *The Jewish Spy* (1739-40).

GOLDSMITH'S *LIFE OF BOLINGBROKE* AND THE  
*BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA*

In a short introduction to Goldsmith's *Life of Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke* (1770) his latest editor, J. W. M. Gibbs, says that one of the two "leading authorities" on which Goldsmith relied for facts in writing the *Life* was the *Biographia Britannica*; <sup>1</sup> but neither in his introduction nor in his notes does Gibbs give any indication that he was aware of how extensive was Goldsmith's indebtedness to this work. The truth is that fully four-fifths of the *Life* was borrowed from this single source. Although Goldsmith made some significant additions, he was content for the most part to select passages from the text and notes of the article "Saint-John" in the *Biographia* and to put them together with few changes.

A typical illustration of Goldsmith's method is the following passage on Bolingbroke's education; it shows him amplifying his source and making fairly frequent changes in diction and construction but unmistakably following the corresponding passage in the *Biographia*:

Goldsmith's *Life*.

... as soon as it was fit to take him out of the hands of the women, he was sent to Eton school, and removed thence to Christ Church College in Oxford. His genius and understanding were seen and admired in both these seminaries, but his love of pleasure had so much the ascendancy, that he seemed content rather with the consciousness of his own great powers, than their exertion. However, his friends, and those who knew him most intimately, were thoroughly sensible of the extent of his mind; and when he left the university, he was considered as one who had the fairest opportunity of making a shining figure in active life.

*Biographia Britannica*.

... as soon as it became proper to take him out of the hands of the women, he was sent to Eton school, and removed thence to Christ-Church-college in Oxford. His genius and understanding were seen and admired by his contemporaries in both these places; but the love of pleasure had so much the ascendancy, as to hinder him from exerting his talents for literature in any particular performance. His friends designed him for publick business, and when he left the university, he was considered as one who had the fairest opportunity of making a shining figure in that way of an active life. With the graces of a handsome person, in whose aspect

<sup>1</sup> See *The Works of Oliver Goldsmith* (London, 1885-86), iv, 180.

*Goldsmith's Life.*

Nature seemed not less kind to him in her external embellishments than in adorning his mind. With the graces of a handsome person, and a face in which dignity was happily blended with sweetness, he had a manner of address that was very engaging. His vivacity was always awake, his apprehension was quick, his wit refined, and his memory amazing: his subtlety in thinking and reasoning was profound; and all these talents were adorned with an elocution that was irresistible.<sup>2</sup>

Goldsmith did not limit his borrowings merely to the exposition in the *Biographia*; as is clear from the following passage on Bolingbroke's settlement at Dawley after his return from exile, he also used the source material brought together in the article:

*Goldsmith's Life.*

. . . he accordingly pitched upon a seat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley, near Uxbridge in Middlesex, where he settled with his lady, and laid himself out to enjoy the rural pleasures in perfection, since the more glorious ones of ambition were denied him. With this resolution he began to improve his new purchase in a very peculiar style, giving it all the air of a country farm, and adorning even his hall with all the implements of husbandry. We have a sketch of his way of living in this retreat in a letter of Pope to Swift, who omits no opportunity of representing his lordship in the most amiable point of view. This letter is dated from Dawley, the country farm above mentioned, and begins thus. . . .

*Biographia Britannica.*

dignity was happily tempered with sweetness, he had a manner and address that was irresistibly engaging; a sparkling vivacity, a quick apprehension, a piercing wit, were united to a prodigious strength of memory, a peculiar subtlety of thinking and reasoning, and a masterly elocution. . . .<sup>3</sup>

*Biographia Britannica.*

. . . he pitched upon a seat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley near Uxbridge in Middlesex, where he settled with his lady, and indulged the pleasure of gratifying the politeness of his taste, by improving it into a most elegant villa, finely picturesque of the present state of his fortune, and there amused himself with rural employments.

We have a sketch of his Lordship's way of life at this retreat, in a letter to Dr Swift by Mr Pope, who omits no opportunity of representing his Lordship in the most amiable colours. This letter is dated at Dawley June 8, 1728, and begins thus . . . So far Mr Pope; to which I will take leave to add, from ocular testimony, that it was painted accordingly; and, what still makes it more striking,

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, IV, 183.

<sup>3</sup> *Biographia Britannica*: or, the lives of the most eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland, v (London, 1760), 3560.



*Goldsmith's Life.*

What Pope here says of his engagements with a painter, was shortly after executed; the hall was painted accordingly in black crayons only, so that at first view it brought to mind the figures often seen scratched with charcoal, or the smoke of a candle, upon the kitchen walls of farmhouses. The whole, however, produced a most striking effect, and over the door at the entrance into it was this motto: *Satis beatus ruris honoribus*. His lordship seemed to be extremely happy in his pursuit of moral tranquillity, and, in the exultation of his heart, could not fail of communicating his satisfactions to his friend Swift. "I am in my own farm," says he, "and here I shoot strong and tenacious roots: I have caught hold of the earth (to use a gardener's phrase), and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an easy matter to transplant me again."<sup>4</sup>

This passage from Goldsmith is typical of a large part of the *Life*. All of the source material which he uses, including the extensive passages quoted or paraphrased from Bolingbroke's own works, was ready at hand in the *Biographia*.<sup>6</sup>

In writing the *Life*, however, Goldsmith did something more

*Biographia Britannica.*

the whole is executed in black crayons only: so that one cannot avoid calling to mind, on viewing it, the figures so often seen scratched with charcoal upon the kitchen-walls of farm-houses. And, to heighten the same taste, we read over the door, at the entrance into it, this motto: *Satis beatus ruris honoribus*. In the same humour, likewise, his Lordship writes to Dr Swift. 'I am in my farm, and here I shoot strong and tenacious roots; I have caught hold of the earth, to use a Gardener's phrase, and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an easy matter to transplant me again.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Works*, iv, 211-12. The omitted quotation from Pope is the same in both texts.

<sup>5</sup> *Biographia Britannica*, v, 3575 and 3575-76, n. BB.

<sup>6</sup> Gibbs says that Goldsmith's other principal authority was "the anonymous Life of Bolingbroke, published in 1752"—i. e., *Memoirs of the life and ministerial conduct, with some free remarks on the political writings, of the late Lord Visc. Bolingbroke* (London, 1752), now ascribed to David Mallet—; but that Goldsmith went directly to the *Memoirs* I think very improbable. All of the passages in the *Life* which seem to come from the *Memoirs* had already been included in the article in the *Biographia*; and in every case where Goldsmith used material from the *Memoirs* which had been paraphrased in the *Biographia*, he is closer to the paraphrase than to the original.

than merely put the material he borrowed from the text and notes of the *Biographia* into literary form. He added at least one of his characteristic ideas,<sup>7</sup> but probably his most original contributions were rather frequent reflections on Bolingbroke's character and analyses of his motives, usually only a sentence or two in length, though sometimes more extended, as in the first two and the last two paragraphs of the *Life*. He also added a number of factual details relating to Bolingbroke's life which are not in the *Biographia* or in any of the other earlier lives of Bolingbroke known to me.<sup>8</sup>

The following are the most important of these factual additions:

(1) The account of Bolingbroke's keeping Miss Gumley and of his drunkenness (*Works*, iv, 184).

(2) His authorship of verses prefixed to *Le chef d'œuvre d'un inconnu* and of "two or three things more . . . which have appeared since his death" (pp. 184-85).

(3) His trouble with his first wife (p. 185; see also p. 210).

(4) Some of the details of the difficulties with which he was faced when he came into office (pp. 188-89).

(5) Some of the details of his quarrel with Oxford (pp. 190-91).

(6) The arrival of George I and his treatment of Oxford (p. 191).

(7) The statement that the Duke of Marlborough "planted his creatures" around Bolingbroke and that an impeachment was being prepared against him (p. 193).

(8) Bolingbroke's work on the *Craftsman* (pp. 213-14).

<sup>7</sup> See *Works*, iv, 183: "This period might have been compared to that of fermentation in liquors, which grow muddy before they brighten; but it must also be confessed, that those liquors which never ferment are seldom clear." For other uses of this same figure see *New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. R. S. Crane (Chicago, 1927), pp. xxiii-xxiv.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to the *Memoirs* (1752) already mentioned, I have examined the following lives: *The Life and History of the Right Honourable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke* (London, 1754); *Memoires Secrets de Mylord Bolingbroke Ecrits par lui-même adressés au Chevalier Windham, précédés d'un discours préliminaire sur la vie de l'auteur* (Londres, 1754); "The life of Henry Saint-John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke," *Universal Magazine*, xxvi (1760), 190-94 (April), 254-58 (May), 290-95 (June): drawn from the *Biographia Britannica* but much more abridged than Goldsmith's *Life*; "The life of Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke," *Universal Museum, and Complete Magazine*, ii (1766), 495-97 (October), 559-63 (November): also drawn from the *Biographia Britannica* but very much more abridged than Goldsmith's account.

(9) Facts of his last illness: his cancer and his treatment of the clergy (p. 219).

(10) A new line, "He passed the latter part of his time at home," which is added to his epitaph (p. 220).

(11) The date of his death as 12 December (p. 220).<sup>9</sup>

These additions are, however, all short. Almost all of them consist of only a sentence or two; and they form relatively a very small part of the *Life*.

These factual additions, most of which occur in the early part of the *Life*, suggest that Goldsmith started out to make it a more or less original piece of work, comparable to the other lives he had written. As it turned out, however, it is little more than a piece of hack-writing in which his contributions are almost lost sight of in the large amount of material that he borrowed.

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<sup>9</sup> The *Memoires Secrets* gives the date as 25 November; all of the other early lives give 15 November; the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *London Magazine* for December, 1751, give 15 December.







